

REPLACEMENT CLAIMS

Please substitute the following claims for the pending claims with the same number.

S. B. Ball
of:

1. (Amended) A method of verifying charges on a customer bill, comprising the steps

of:

downloading, from a mainframe computer, to a local server billing data associated with a customer account, the billing data being associated with a hold bill that is scheduled to be sent as a customer bill to a customer, the hold bill including calculated tax charges;

populating a database with a portion of the billing data;

performing pre-calculation functions on another portion of the billing data and populating the database with results of the pre-calculation functions;

displaying predetermined categories of information stored in the database;

calculating the taxes for each of several charges in the billing data and storing tax results in the database; and

comparing the tax results with the calculated tax charges on the customer hold bill.

J. J.

11. (Amended) A method of verifying taxes on account charges on a customer hold bill, the hold bill being a bill that is scheduled to be sent as a customer bill to a customer, the method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a tax rate information database that is in communication with a data network;

maintaining a database that includes account charges;

automatically applying the tax rate information to the account charges and storing a result;

displaying the result on a computer that is in communication with the data network; and comparing the result with the taxes appearing on the hold bill.

16. (Amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising applying optical character recognition software to the image and storing a file representative of characters obtained.

20. (Amended) A method of independently verifying the accuracy of tax charges on a bill generated for a customer account, the bill being one that is scheduled to be sent as a customer bill to a customer, the method comprising the steps of:

downloading data, including customer charges, that is the basis for bill generation, to a local server;

automatically determining which charges are subject to taxation;

automatically calculating the tax for the charges subject to taxation and storing tax results;

displaying the tax results; and

comparing the tax results to the tax charges on the bill,

wherein the bill generated for a customer account is generated on a mainframe computer and the local server is operable separately from the mainframe computer.